

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323857842>

# Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Preprint · March 2018

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.28047.28320

---

CITATIONS

0

1 author:



Kevin Macdonald

California State University, Long Beach

133 PUBLICATIONS 2,722 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Ethnicity [View project](#)



Evolution of Intelligence [View project](#)

# REPLY TO NATHAN COFNAS

KEVIN MACDONALD<sup>1</sup>

---

After 20 years of silence from academics, Nathan Cofnas has written a [comprehensive critical review](#) of *The Culture of Critique* in an academic venue. I have been waiting for this to happen and was beginning to think it never would. Academics want their work to be taken seriously, and honest academics value the rough and tumble of academic debate. But what I got was silence, or comments like that of Steven Pinker, who is listed in the Acknowledgements section of Cofnas's review, saying that it was below the threshold of academic interest—and that he hadn't read it.

My book was incendiary, and I knew that. What had begun as a theoretical idea on how human groups could become vehicles of natural selection (rank heresy at the time and still controversial but increasingly respectable<sup>2</sup>) had turned into a life-changing project. As a result of the silence, my response was to continue to expand on my ideas and to keep them out there so people could judge for themselves. I would have much preferred to be a respectable academic with a solid reputation, attending conferences and writing only academic papers and books. But respectability was impossible, so I decided to continue writing in this area outside the academic realm.

Thus I became something of an activist intellectual—following in the footsteps, one might say, of the many Jewish intellectuals discussed in my work, but completely outside the academic system. Hounded out of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society and ostracized at my university,<sup>3</sup> I decided to

---

<sup>1</sup> Kevin MacDonald ([kevin.macdonald@csulb.edu](mailto:kevin.macdonald@csulb.edu)) is Professor Emeritus of psychology at California State University–Long Beach.

<sup>2</sup> For example, cultural group selection is a commonly held view of members of [the Cultural Evolution Society](#). My theorizing going back to the early 1980s has always emphasized cultural factors, particularly [social controls and ideology](#) in regulating behavior, beginning with work on the maintenance of monogamy in European culture (e.g. [here](#)). This progressed to a discussion of the Spartans as exhibiting what I later termed a group evolutionary strategy (in Chapter 8 of *Social and Personality Development: An Evolutionary Synthesis* (New York: Plenum, 1988). I then decided to do a similar treatment of Judaism and began research on it in 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Cofnas makes the following claim:

The strategy employed 18 years ago—declaring his work to be anti-Semitic and/or to not reach the threshold to warrant scholarly attention—had the doubly unfortunate effect of intimidating scholars with a legitimate interest in the topic of Jewish evolution and behavior, and creating a perception among some laypeople—even if it was false—that MacDonald was being persecuted by the academic community.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

push the envelope. I started by writing a few blogs on [my website](#) related to my three books on Judaism and other topics related to evolutionary psychology. Then, in 2008, I started *The Occidental Observer* where I could get other writers involved. A few years later, I took over editing *The Occidental Quarterly* and am proud to have published a great many academic-quality articles over the years, many by Ph.Ds. Sadly most of the writers for both *TOO* and *TOQ* have had to remain anonymous because of the reign of terror at universities (and in the private sector) against anyone who dissents from the status quo on race and ethnicity.

A major reason for my activism was because of the reading I had done in writing the trilogy, particularly *CofC. A People that Shall Dwell Alone* was about how Judaism operated in traditional societies, and *Separation and Its Discontents* was essentially about anti-Semitism in traditional societies. This is water over the dam, one might say, however one might analyze causes of anti-Semitism in times past. But that changed in reading about the role of Jewish activism on the left over the past century. Misguided intellectual movements like psychoanalysis may be successfully rebutted and eventually fall by the wayside—as psychoanalysis has. Disastrous political ventures such as Communism may eventually self-destruct after wreaking untold horror and dysgenic mass murder. However, the effects of immigration policy are of immediate and critical concern for the entire West. As I noted at the outset of Chapter 7 of *CofC*:

Immigration policy is a paradigmatic example of conflicts of interest between ethnic groups because immigration policy determines the future demographic composition of the nation. Ethnic groups unable to influence immigration policy in their own interests will eventually be displaced by groups able to accomplish this goal. Immigration policy is thus of fundamental interest to an evolutionist.

In other words, I began to see myself as having a dog in this fight. What was happening was, from an evolutionary perspective, a disaster for the White people of the West. Ethnic displacement is like reducing an extended family or other

---

In fact, I was being persecuted by the academic community by any ordinary meaning of the term. Following the Shulevitz controversy mentioned by Cofnas, I was on a panel devoted to my work at the 2000 meetings of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society. It was [quite raucous](#), with a lot of very vocal opposition to my work, followed by cold shoulders from other officers and other prominent members of the society (I held the office of Secretary at the time). I never felt welcome thereafter. And although I was blackballed at least once at a prestigious academic journal, I did manage to continue to [publish](#) my work on personality, developmental psychology, evolutionary theory of culture, and the evolution of intelligence in reputable, even [prominent](#) academic venues. More painful were [events at my university beginning in 2006–07](#) following a visit by Heidi Beirich of the Southern Poverty Law Center, later joined by a representative of the Anti-Defamation League. This began a process of ostracism and intense hostility from many CSULB faculty, expressed on faculty email listservs maintained by the university, as well as condemnatory resolutions by academic departments and the Academic Senate.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

lineage—a drastic loss of fitness, as Frank Salter has shown,<sup>4</sup> and really no different from displacement on one species or subspecies by another in the natural world. This is natural selection in action (although one hesitates to call a consciously engineered process “natural”), as the gene frequencies, genetic combinations and bio-cultures characteristic of other peoples increase relative to those of the indigenous people of Western European countries as well as their descendants in North America, Australia, and New Zealand.

So I was highly motivated to continue my work, even outside the academic setting. And, as Cofnas notes, the books became influential—particularly *CofC*. I think a lot of that was because of my newfound activism aimed at building an audience and continuing to expand on the trilogy, but also because there hadn’t been any noteworthy critiques of it. The lack of credible criticism created something of an anomaly: What is now called the Alt Right—a movement that is vilified by all sectors of the establishment, from left to right—was embracing an academic book on Jewish activism published by a mainstream academic publisher that had never received a proper hearing in the academic world. One would think that the academic establishment would come down hard on such a book, bringing all its prestige and media access to eradicate this heresy. But nothing. So, it continued to fester and gain popularity.

Whatever one thinks of this reply, I welcome the opportunity to respond. Frankly, a reasoned exchange is long overdue.

\* \* \*

My procedure here is to respond to each of Cofnas’s substantive points in the same order as they appear in his review. I do not respond to the ad hominem attacks. Nevertheless, there are several general points to be made.

1. Much of Cofnas’s critique depends on the claim that I conceive of the Jewish community as monolithic. As a result, he repeatedly brings up examples of Jews who dissent from various intellectual and political views that are common among Jews or those participating in the Jewish movements I discuss (e.g., Jewish critics of Israel, Jewish critics of the left). On the contrary and as will be apparent below, I see the Jewish community as having important diversity of viewpoint. However, the purpose of my book is to study movements that have been influential and to determine the Jewish role in these movements. This is entirely compatible with dissent by some Jews.

As a result, although the theory is falsifiable (e.g., by showing that these movements were not in any interesting sense Jewish or that they didn’t really have any power or influence), it cannot be falsified by providing individual counterexamples.

---

<sup>4</sup> Frank K Salter, *On Genetic Interests: Family, Ethnicity, and Kinship in an Age of Mass Migration* (London: Routledge, 2006).

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

2. Cofnas in several places characterizes my view as stating that the fact that some non-Jews have participated in Jewish movements implies Jewish manipulation, Machiavellianism, or that they have been blindly indoctrinated (e.g., Margaret Mead as a “puppet” of Franz Boas). These are misrepresentations. My view is that non-Jews who participate in Jewish movements may have a variety of motivations, ranging from sincere belief (perhaps motivated by their own, independently derived hostility to the cultural norms being attacked by the movement) to naked self-interest (non-Jews who see career opportunities by participating). A good example of the latter not discussed in *CofC* is the neoconservative infrastructure composed of well-funded think tanks and lobbying groups, with multiple opportunities for access to careers, not only in these think tanks and lobbying groups, but in government, the media, and universities ([here](#), pp. 11–12). But even when participating in such a movement has material rewards, there is no implication that the non-Jews involved don’t sincerely hold their beliefs.
3. In general, Jewish support for any particular idea or cause will be sensitive to each generation’s perceived interests given changing circumstances. Cofnas has a static, ahistorical conception of Jewish interests, assuming, e.g., that supporting Zionism is essential to Jewish group interests and self-identity since the origins of political Zionism or perhaps since the origins of the Diaspora (the traditional Jewish phrase: “Next year in Jerusalem”). On the contrary, as discussed in several places here, Jewish support for causes like Zionism, radical leftism, or particular governments have a history—a beginning, a middle, and often an end. If it’s one thing that has characterized Jews throughout their history, it’s that they have been what evolutionary biologist Richard Alexander termed “flexible strategizers.”<sup>5</sup> There is no reason to suppose that will not continue in the future.

\* \* \*

### **INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL**

1. Cofnas claims that if he is successful in refuting *CofC*, he would have in effect refuted the first two books as well ([here](#) and [here](#)). This is incorrect. In fact, the three books are quite separate theoretically and discuss entirely different data sets. *A People That Shall Dwell Alone* develops a theory of Judaism in traditional societies based on the idea that humans are able to create “experiments in living” that can, e.g., erect barriers between themselves and the surrounding society, structure mating opportunities in a eugenic manner, and structure relationships

---

<sup>5</sup> Richard Alexander, *Darwinism and Human Affairs* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979; as applied to Jewish groups, see [here](#), p. 5 and Chapter 1 of *A People That Shall Dwell Alone: Judaism as a Group Evolutionary Strategy*.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

within the Jewish community and between Jews and non-Jews. *CofC* could be completely misguided but all the claims made in *A People That Shall Dwell Alone* true.

The same may be said about *Separation and Its Discontents* whose value depends on the adequacy of the theoretical framework (social identity theory which, although mentioned in *CofC*, is hardly essential to that work and certainly not disputed by Cofnas) and the accuracy of my use of the historical sources. Again, *CofC* could be completely misguided while *Separation and Its Discontents* was entirely valid.

2. Cofnas proposes a “default hypothesis” of Jewish involvement in twentieth-century liberal movements, namely: Because of Jewish intelligence and geography—particularly intelligence—Jews are likely to be overrepresented in any intellectual movement or activity that is not overtly anti-Semitic.” I accept the idea of high average Ashkenazi IQ, especially verbal IQ, although I defer to Richard Lynn’s research on the mean; my critique of Cochran and Harpending is [here](#). I therefore expect Jews to be overrepresented in intellectual movements, and we could leave it at that. However, there is nothing wrong with attempting something more ambitious, such as exploring how these intellectuals perceived their actions (motivation) and exploring the dynamics of the movements by asking questions like whether ethnic networking was important (as it has been throughout Jewish history) and whether any generalizations could be made about the leaders of these movements (the guru phenomenon) and how they dealt with dissent. I agree that in general and for obvious reasons, Jews won’t be attracted to theories that cast Jews in a bad light; indeed, a major point regarding Jewish motivation for the theories discussed is to oppose anti-Semitism. Moreover, as mentioned below, Jews have been underrepresented in some theories and cultural trends that do not cast Jews in a bad light or at least do not necessarily do so—e.g., populism, paleoconservatism, and promotion of European national cultures.

This is the general framework (from the [Preface to the paperback edition of \*Culture of Critique\*](#), 2002):

(1.) Find influential movements dominated by Jews, with no implication that all or most Jews are involved in these movements and no restrictions on what the movements are. For example, I touch on Jewish neo-conservatism which is a departure in some ways from the other movements I discuss [later expanded into a [chapter-length essay](#) using the same framework as *CofC*]. In general, relatively few Jews were involved in most of these movements and significant numbers of Jews may have been unaware of their existence. Even Jewish leftist radicalism—surely the most widespread and influential Jewish sub-culture of the twentieth century—may have been a minority movement within Jewish communities in the

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

United States and other Western societies for most periods. As a result, when I criticize these movements I am not necessarily criticizing most Jews. Nevertheless, these movements were influential and they were Jewishly motivated.

(2.) Determine whether the Jewish participants in those movements identified as Jews *and* thought of their involvement in the movement as advancing specific Jewish interests. Involvement may be unconscious or involve self-deception, but for the most part it was quite easy and straightforward to find evidence for these propositions. If I thought that self-deception was important (as in the case of many Jewish radicals), I provided evidence that in fact they did identify as Jews and were deeply concerned about Jewish issues despite surface appearances to the contrary.

...

(3.) Try to gauge the influence of these movements on gentile society. Keep in mind that the influence of an intellectual or political movement dominated by Jews is independent of the percentage of the Jewish community that is involved in the movement or supports the movement. [For example, Zionism is a Jewish movement that, until the establishment of Israel, was not a majority view within the Jewish community. It was nevertheless influential (e.g., obtaining the Balfour Declaration, pressuring President Truman to recognize Israel).]

(4.) Try to show how non-Jews responded to these movements—for example, were they a source of anti-Semitism?

Several of the movements I discuss have been very influential in the social sciences. However, I do not argue that there are no Jews who do good social science, and in fact [in Chapter 2] I provide a list of prominent Jewish social scientists who in my opinion do not meet the conditions outlined under (2) above.

This framework will be useful in the ensuing discussion. In any case, a default position is just that. Simplifying theory certainly has its advantages, but quite often much more can be said. Of course, the burden is on me to show that a more complex theory gives a deeper explanation of what we see.

3. Cofnas claims that I haven't provided evidence that Jews involved in particular intellectual movements have often gone out of their way to recruit non-Jews as visible leaders of the movement. I will discuss this as it arises in his detailed comments on Boas where I also mention Freud, and leftist radicalism. However, this phenomenon goes far beyond the intellectual and political movements discussed in *CofC*. In Chapter 6 of *Separation and Its Discontents* (pp. 193–196) I discuss several historical examples, beginning with the New Christians during the period of the Inquisition in fifteenth-century Spain. Jewish organizations had an active role in establishing and maintaining gentile-

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

dominated organizations opposed to anti-Semitism in Germany in the period from 1870 to 1933 and in supplying materials without any indication of their source to anti-fascist candidates in the U.K. in the 1930s. In the U.S., I cite historian Howard Sachar for his discussion of “non-Jewish ‘front’ committees at which Jews would prove exceptionally adept in future years.” including areas such as opposition to Czarist Russia, support for liberal immigration policies, removing Christianity from the public square, and socialist and communist movements (the latter of which is expanded on in Chapter 3 of *CofC*). In the same vein, I also cite research indicating that in the ancient world there was an entire apologetic literature written by Jews masquerading as gentiles.

As I note in *Separation and Its Discontents*, such a strategy makes excellent psychological sense:

From an evolutionary perspective the intent is to make the Jewish cause appear to be in the interests of others as well. When goals are cast in ethnic or national terms, they are not likely to appeal to those outside the group. Indeed, such obviously self-interested goals would be likely to alert outsiders to conflicts of interest between ingroup and outgroup. On the other hand, a standard finding in social psychology is that people are more likely to respond positively when goals are advocated by similar others, or when the goal is cast as being in the interests of all rather than in the interests of an outgroup, as predicted by social identity theory and genetic similarity theory (see Chapter 1).

4. Cofnas claims that I cherry-pick examples and ignore examples that do not fit my theory, pointing to examples like Noam Chomsky and Karl Marx. However, as noted above, there is no implication that all Jews (or all famous Jews) fit into a particular mold. There was in fact strong opposition to Zionism within the Jewish community during the early decades of the twentieth century motivated by fears, based firmly in Jewish history, that Zionism among Diaspora Jews would be seen as disloyalty by their fellow citizens (see the sections titled “Zionism as a Risky Strategy” and “Zionist Extremism Becomes Mainstream” in “[Zionism and the Internal Dynamics of Judaism](#),” 220–228). Chomsky’s position has been outside the Jewish mainstream, although quite recently segments of liberal Jews have actively opposed central features of Zionism as it exists in Israel today (e.g., Philip Weiss (editor of [Mondoweiss](#)), Jewish Voice for Peace, J Street).

Like Chomsky, these Jews tend to be on the left, generally perceiving a conflict between contemporary leftist ideals of multicultural harmony (which they support) and the reality of Israel’s oppression of the Palestinians. Support for Israel is definitely slipping on the left. For example, the 2018 AIPAC convention had a host of prominent politicians—as usual, but with a greater than

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

usual emphasis on Democratic politicians—presumably an attempt to shore up support for Israel within the Democratic Party (see Philip Weiss, “[Schumer and Dems Outdo Trump at AIPAC—There’s No Peace Because ‘Palestinians Don’t Believe in Torah’](#)”). Nevertheless, opposition to Israel within the party is [growing](#), with more voices than ever willing to reject the AIPAC line. Opposition to Israel has also become quite important in the UK [Labour Party](#) (often [vilified as “anti-Semitism”](#))

It's also worth noting that although there has always been a substantial consensus on Israel since its establishment by American Jews, the Israel Lobby has maintained this consensus partly by policing the Jewish community by punishing dissenters (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#))—a very traditional mechanism of control within the Jewish community discussed in Chapter 7 of *A People That Shall Dwell Alone*. Nevertheless, dissent is [growing](#) within the Jewish community.

But the important question, as always, is not counting heads—even prominent ones like Chomsky—but in determining where the influence lies, and at this writing there is no indication for a diminishing influence of the [Israel Lobby](#) and major Jewish donors on American political elites. These donors collectively contribute vastly out of proportion to their numbers and many of them are well-known to be strong supporters of Israel. In the U.S., donors like [Haim Saban](#) (“a one-note person whose one note is Israel”) and Sheldon Adelson, prominent donors to the Democrat and Republican parties respectively, come to mind as primarily motivated to support pro-Israel policies. But they are not alone. On a [list](#) of “the top 50 donors to 527’s and super-PACs, eight of the 36 Republican bigs were Jewish, and of the 14 Democrats, only one was *not* Jewish.” The Democrats are basically funded by Jews, and Jewish donations to the GOP are too large to be ignored by politicians seeking higher office. President Trump’s largest donor was Sheldon Adelson (at least \$25 million), “[who has long prioritized Israel in his political calculations](#).” Adelson is [reputed](#) to have influenced the move of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, and has recently [offered](#) to fund the move. Philip Weiss [suggests](#) that Adelson’s money is behind the recent appointment of Mike Pompeo as Secretary of State.

Regarding Marx, I have a brief discussion of the perception that Marx was an anti-Semite at the beginning of [Chapter 3](#) whose topic is “whether acceptance of radical, universalist ideologies and participation in radical, universalist movements are compatible with Jewish identification.” As I note there, whatever Marx’s views, they are not important for understanding Jewish participation on the left over the time span covered in the book (~1900–1970), and in general the point of that chapter is that Jewish leftists tended to have strong Jewish identifications and were quite concerned about anti-Semitism (perhaps not the case with Marx). These leftists were not in any sense anti-Semites.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that John Murray Cuddihy, whose *The Ordeal of Civility* is cited repeatedly in *CofC*, provides what one might term a deep Jewish structure to Marx's work.<sup>6</sup> For example:

The “final triumph” of Marxism is Marx's refusal to give a remedial and apologetic reading of the economic behavior of the Jews, describing it with unembarrassed bluntness, only to turn around and make this crude Judentum the very stuff (*Unterbau*) of the bourgeois civilization of the goyim. It is a failure of understanding that seeds in Marx's conviction—that stripped of his sublimations and refinements a Gentile is as avaricious as a Jew—an offense only to Jews. “Christianity,” Marx writes, “overcame real Judaism only in appearance. It was too refined, too spiritual, to eliminate the crudeness of practical need except by elevating it into the blue. Christianity is the sublime thought of Judaism, and Judaism is the vulgar practical application of Christianity.”

Like theodicies, the sociodicies of the Diaspora giants cope with the problem of pain, suffering, and evil. Each bestows meaning, and thus “solves” the *tsuris* of Galut, the status-loss of Emancipation, the humiliations of “assimilation” (“imitation”), the embarrassment of being defined as “primitive.” If, as E. M. Forster said, “Coarseness reveals; vulgarity conceals,” Freud, Marx, and Lévi-Strauss struggle to redefine *Ostjude*: He becomes—like Rousseau's “natural” man—an instrument of critique of the Jewish (and Gentile) parvenu. He may be a “primitive” and crude; he is not hypocritical (Freud's “ethnic of honesty”).<sup>7</sup>

...

When Jewry was physically peripheral to Europe, locked into its shtetlach in the pale, this provincial assertion of moral superiority, of moral purism, was that of a spatial outsider, a geographical provincial. With Emancipation into Europe, the axis of this moralism shifted from a horizontal to a vertical plane, splitting into the toplofty “mission to the Gentiles” of Reform Judaism on the one hand and, on the other, into Marx's underclass of society and Freud's underside of personality. In each case, proletariat and id were invested with a subversively pure moral critique of the hypocritical, if superior, civilization of the West.<sup>8</sup> ...

---

<sup>6</sup> John Murray Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Levi-Strauss, and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity* (New York: Basic Books, 1974). I corresponded with Cuddihy toward the end of his life. He was very happy to see that I had found his work useful, which I interpreted as suggesting that he felt that his book had been ignored and hadn't received the attention it deserved. Perhaps the fact that he had written a brilliant book on post-Emancipation Jewry only to see it essentially ignored by later scholars had a role in my decision to continue to promote my work outside an academic setting.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 160–161.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

To learn the nature of the civilization of the West we must go...to the great unassimilated, implacable Jews of the West, to a Marx, to a Freud, to a Lévi-Strauss, to a Harry Wolfson, to those who exhibit a principled and stubborn resistance to the whole Western “thing.” These proud pariahs *experience* Western civilization as an incognito or secularized form of Christianity, and they therefore openly resist it *as such*.<sup>9</sup>

Again, nothing really hinges on whether Marx identified as a Jew or saw himself as advancing Jewish interests. However, I agree with Cuddihy’s assessment, and conclude that Marx’s writing does suggest at least an implicit congruence with the main themes of *CofC*.

Regarding Soros, he was not mentioned for two reasons: during the mid-1990s when the book was written, he had not become the iconic funder of the left that he is today. Moreover, Soros’s actions are consistent with those of many Jewish activists on the left these days: strong support for immigration and multiculturalism throughout the Diaspora and critical of Israel (see above). I have never read anything on Soros’s Jewish identification and how he sees his actions in light of being Jewish but would be interested in doing so. Whatever one finds on this, it would not impact the material on Jewish intellectual and political movements—particularly the Jewish role in altering US immigration policy and promoting multiculturalism, and certainly including the other movements discussed in *CofC*. Again, I never assume Jews are monolithic on any issue.

Cofnas: “Just as problematically, in a number of cases MacDonald fails to report that Jews whom he identifies as ethnic activists took stands against Israel and other Jewish interests (again, defining ‘Jewish interests’ in MacDonald’s terms as ethnic self-preservation).”

Again, support for Israel is not synonymous with how Jews see their ethnic interests at any particular time, and there has likely never been a time when it was unanimous. Jewish support for a Jewish ethnosestate was a minority view among Jews prior to the end of World War II, and today Jewish support for Israel in the Diaspora is declining—particularly noticeable among liberal/left Jews. There may be many reasons for this, ranging from lofty idealism to concern that Israeli policies will be disastrous for Israel and Jewish interests in the long run.

5. Cofnas: “Many twentieth-century Jews ostensibly abandoned their Jewish identity and sought to assimilate. MacDonald points out that these Jews often did not support gentile nationalist movements—which he acknowledges were anti-Semitic—and he argues that this is evidence that these Jews were insincere in their desire to assimilate and were actually engaging in ‘Jewish crypsis’ (his term).”

---

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 231; emphasis in original.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Cofnas gives no examples of this, either from *CofC* or my [other writing](#), although in a later passage he claims that I attribute crypsis to the Frankfurt School luminaries (discussed below). As a result, I can't rebut it. However, in 2016 I wrote an article on how Jews should be treated if they express interest in aiding the Alt Right (see section titled "Jews and the Alt Right" in "[The Alt Right and the Jews](#)"), and I have several Jewish writers who write for *The Occidental Observer* (e.g., [Dr. Marcus Alethia](#)): "As an American (first) and Jew (second) who supports Trump and Trumpism, the European New Right, and anyone concerned with the long-term impacts of mass immigration, I want to see more Jews, particularly younger, Generation Z Jews move to our ideological side." I am more than happy to welcome such individuals.

6 Cofnas claims that I misrepresent sources but defers examples. I will discuss these as they come up in his specific comments.

7. Cofnas claims that my theory can't be falsified because "no evidence is ever provided that is acknowledged to count against the theory." Cofnas asserts this because he does not really grasp what I am saying. Again, there are different groups of Jews. He brings up affirmative action which I discuss briefly in Chapter 8. However, the point I am making in Chapter 8 that in a multicultural society, there will be disagreements on issues like affirmative action because different ethnic groups have different talents and abilities. In general in *CofC* I attempted to describe different factions regarded as influential and attempted to understand if Jewish influence is important in particular areas. But in the case of affirmative action, I have never done an examination of the relative importance of different strands of Jewish activism and voting have been in the affirmative action debate and so don't care to comment. The individual Jews and even Jewish organizations that I list there as opposing affirmative action may or may not be representative of the Jewish community as a whole. Similarly, in the lead up to the Iraq war, there was considerable (I think decisive: [here](#), [here](#), [here](#)) influence from neoconservatives and Jewish organization like AIPAC, but polls indicated most Jews opposed the war.

As noted above, what would count against what I am arguing is to show that I am wrong about specific claims—that, e.g., there is no interesting sense in which psychoanalysis was a Jewish movement, or that Jews and the organized Jewish community (not all Jews) were not at all decisive in influencing U.S. immigration policy, or I am mistaken about the internal dynamics of these movements (e.g., the treatment of dissenters, the guru phenomenon). Cofnas doesn't even begin to address any of these issues. The theses of *CofC* are eminently falsifiable.

Is the theory presented in *CofC* predictive? Predictive power is considered the gold standard of scientific theories. However, consider the difficulties of developing a predictive theory of Jewish group behavior in the post-Enlightenment West, i.e., after the lapse of strong community controls on the behavior of individual Jews typical of traditional societies. Within the Jewish

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

group there is wide variation in Jewish identity, ranging from highly committed activists to Jews who are unininvolved for personal reasons (e.g., psychiatric issues or bad experiences with the Jewish community) or perhaps they have family ties to non-Jews because of intermarriage or they are lower on ethnocentrism. The activist edge of the Jewish community tends to be the most strongly identified and will be the [main force](#) charting the direction of the community as a whole, and there is often more or less of a consensus among the organized Jewish community on particular issues like immigration or Israel, despite there being some strongly identified Jews who dissent from this consensus (e.g., Stephen Steinlight on immigration [[here](#), pp. iv–vi] or Philip Weiss on Zionism).

But even assuming a well-reasoned consensus among the activists as to what is in the interests of Jews, this consensus could change if conditions change. Activists might evaluate the effects of Muslim immigration as harming Jewish interests in the long run, as Steinlight does, and the consensus of Diaspora Jews on Israel may change for a number of reasons (e.g., they may see their position in the Diaspora West as endangered because Israeli behavior has become indefensible and has lost support from non-Jews). Such a change in activist consensus would likely be gradual, just as the decline in Jewish support for the USSR was gradual. Non-Jewish elites may begin to see that their business interests are compromised because of successful pressure by the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, or Muslims may begin to exert real power in the West, as seems to be [happening](#) in the U.K.

Moreover, the consensus may not be entirely rational. It's clear that many activist Jews in the Diaspora (but by no means all) will support Israel no matter what, while at the same time Israel has become increasingly dominated by extreme ethnonationalists bent on extending current policy of dispossessing the Palestinians (see, e.g., [here](#), p. 49–50; [here](#)). A prediction of what Diaspora Jews will do if these trends continue to accelerate would be a bit like predicting the weather in Los Angeles on a specific day in 2030. I am content to regard *CofC* as a descriptive historical account of some important examples of Jewish group behavior embedded within an evolutionary framework and leave it at that.

8. Cofnas claims that I have ignored centuries of non-Jewish radicalism. Not true. What I call an “[indigenous culture of critique](#)“ has been a major concern of mine for years (see also [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) and will be a central part of a book on Western peoples (an interest of mine that long pre-dated my interest in Judaism; e.g., [here](#), [here](#)) that I hope to finish this year. My view is that because Western peoples are more individualistic (and therefore less ethnocentric), they are more prone to such views, but that in the early twentieth century a Darwinian-based movement became dominant in the social sciences and had influenced U.S. immigration policy. Darwinism was essentially destroyed by the Jewish-dominated movements discussed in *CofC* only to be resurrected in pale form with the publication of E.O. Wilson's *Sociobiology*. Nevertheless, Darwinism remains a very minor influence in the social sciences and humanities

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

as a whole. My argument for this is presented in [my review](#) of Eric Kaufmann's *The Rise and Fall of Anglo-America* and especially in [my exchange](#) with the author.

### CHAPTER 2: THE BOASIAN SCHOOL OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE DECLINE OF DARWINISM IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Cofnas: "MacDonald sees Boas as having been a strongly identified Jew who pursued (and distorted) science with the goal of preventing anti-Semitism." Exactly, but I provide evidence for these claims. This is the first paragraph of the chapter:

Several writers have commented on the "radical changes" that occurred in the goals and methods of the social sciences consequent to the entry of Jews to these fields (Liebman 1973, 213; see also Degler 1991; Hollinger 1996; Horowitz 1993, 75; Rothman & Lichten 1982). Degler (1991, 188ff) notes that the shift away from Darwinism as the fundamental paradigm of the social sciences resulted from an ideological shift rather than from the emergence of any new empirical data. He also notes that Jewish intellectuals have been instrumental in the decline of Darwinism and other biological perspectives in American social science since the 1930s (p. 200). The opposition of Jewish intellectuals to Darwinism has long been noticed (Lenz 1931, 674; see also comments of John Maynard Smith in Lewin [1992, 43]).

Does Cofnas refute these claims? These are all reputable sources, the majority Jews. Note Degler in particular: "Boas' influence upon American social scientists in matters of race can hardly be exaggerated." In the following paragraph I cite Irving Horowitz on similar trends in sociology:

The advent of Jewish intellectuals in the pre–World War II period resulted in "a level of politicization unknown to sociology's founding fathers. It is not only that the names of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim replaced those of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, but also that the sense of America as a consensual experience gave way to a sense of America as a series of conflicting definitions" (Horowitz 1993, 75). In the post–World War II period, sociology "became populated by Jews to such a degree that jokes abounded: one did not need the synagogue, the *minyan* [i.e., the minimum number of Jews required for a communal religious service] was to be found in sociology departments; or, one did not need a sociology of Jewish life, since the two had become synonymous" (Horowitz 1993, 77).

What is critical is the Jewish role in the shift away from Darwinism which had been the dominant paradigm. The long-range effects of this shift have been of

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

incalculable importance for the history of the West. A prime example is that the demise of Darwinism was of critical importance in intellectual arguments over immigration. For example, the American Jewish Congress cited Boas in its statement to Congress, and Boasians Ashley Montagu and Margaret Mead testified before Congressional committees, supporting racial egalitarianism. “By 1965 Senator Jacob Javits (*Cong. Rec.*, 111, 1965, 24469) could confidently announce to the Senate during the debate on the immigration bill that ‘both the dictates of our consciences as well as the precepts of sociologists tell us that immigration, as it exists in the national origins quota system, is wrong and without any basis in reason or fact for we know better than to say that one man is better than another because of the color of his skin’” (see Chapter 7). Doing away with the national origins quota system meant that immigration in the future would not be biased toward Europe. The ethnic status quo envisioned by the 1924 immigration restriction law rapidly became a distant memory.

The demise of a Darwinian paradigm was also critical to [my reply](#) to Eric Kaufmann noted above:

My view is that the eclipse of Darwinism left the ethnic defense of Anglo-America to religious and popular movements, and that these were unable to dominate elite intellectual discourse, the academic world, or the media. This left a huge opening for the triumph of the New York Intellectuals and other anti-WASP movements of the left.

If Darwinism had won the war for the intellectual high ground, the New York Intellectuals’ and the Frankfurt School’s implicit ideological message that WASPs had a moral imperative to give up hegemony would have been a non-starter. That’s why I (along with scholars like George Stocking and Carl Degler) emphasize Boas—his triumph in academic anthropology sealed the fate of Darwinism.

Cofnas complains that my chapter as a whole “suggest[s] that Boasians were the first to romanticize primitive cultures as “idyllic” and not subject to the ills of Western civilization. In reality, by Boas’s time this had been a major theme among many gentile intellectuals for more than 150 years.” But from the above, it’s obvious that this is irrelevant. The point is that the Darwinian paradigm had been eradicated from the social sciences. No Darwinian would romanticize non-Western societies, and indeed, in Chapter 2 I note that a result of the triumph of the Boasians was that

when Harry Turney-High published his volume *Primitive Warfare* in 1949 documenting the universality of warfare and its oftentimes awesome savagery, the book was completely ignored by the anthropological profession—another example of the exclusionary tactics used against dissenters among the Boasians and characteristic of the other intellectual

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

movements reviewed in this volume as well. Turney-High's massive data on non-Western peoples conflicted with the image of them favored by a highly politicized profession whose members simply excluded these data entirely from intellectual discourse. The result was a "pacified past" (Keeley 1996, 163ff) and an "attitude of self-reproach" (p. 179) in which the behavior of primitive peoples was bowdlerized while the behavior of European peoples was not only excoriated as uniquely evil but also as responsible for all extant examples of warfare among primitive peoples. From this perspective, it is only the fundamental inadequacy of European culture that prevents an idyllic world free from between-group conflict.

I am well aware that there is a long history of romanticizing non-Western peoples. However, such views had lost out to the Darwinians, only to be resurrected by an intellectual movement dominated by strongly identified Jews with a sense of pursuing Jewish interests:

As [Gelya] Frank (1997, 731) points out, "The preponderance of Jewish intellectuals in the early years of Boasian anthropology and the Jewish identities of anthropologists in subsequent generations has been downplayed in standard histories of the discipline." Jewish identifications and the pursuit of perceived Jewish interests, particularly in advocating an ideology of cultural pluralism as a model for Western societies, has been the "invisible subject" of American anthropology—invisible because the ethnic identifications and ethnic interests of its advocates have been masked by a language of science in which such identifications and interests were publicly illegitimate.

Cofnas does not dispute my evidence that Boas was a strongly identified Jew who saw his work as combatting anti-Semitism and that he was motivated by his hatred for the Prussian aristocracy.

Regarding Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict, the first point to make is that whatever their motivations, they do not cast doubt on the basic thesis of the chapter—that the shift away from Darwinism was fundamentally a project of Boas and his disciples. None of the intellectual movements reviewed in *CofC* was composed exclusively of Jews, and I discuss the issue of the motivation of non-Jews who were involved in these movements in several places, essentially proposing three compatible reasons: identification with a group that sees itself as oppressed, evolutionarily influenced social learning mechanisms in which prominent individuals are looked up to and admired, and the material rewards available to those who sign on to the movement (see Chapter 1).

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

I have expanded on these ideas in an article “[Why are Professors Liberals](#)” in which I use the work of Neil Gross and Ethan Fosse as a framework for understanding the characteristics of successful intellectual movements.<sup>10</sup>

- (1) those involved in the movement had a complaint (anti-Semitism, cultural exclusion); (2) they were able to form cohesive, effective networks; (3) they had access to the most prestigious academic institutions.

It will be readily seen that *CofC* provides evidence in support of all three of these criteria for the movements I discuss. Moreover, a thesis of “Why Are Professors Liberals” is that shortly after the Jewish ascendancy in academia in the 1960s other groups with grievances against American culture were recruited to form various departments composed mainly of activists against their particular complaint (women’s and gender studies, ethnic studies). Similarly, outside academia Jewish groups have made a major project of [making alliances](#) with non-White groups to advance their interests in multicultural America.

However, not everyone need have a complaint. In Chapter 2 I cite Carl Degler on Boasian Alfred Kroeber: ‘In contrast to the ideological and political basis of Boas’s motivation, Kroeber’s militant environmentalism and defense of the culture concept was ‘entirely theoretical and professional’ (Degler 1991, 90).’

Despite Cofnas’s claims, there is evidence that Boas “recruited gentiles into his movement out of concern ‘that his Jewishness would make his science appear partisan and thus compromised,’” citing John M. Efron’s *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-Siècle Europe*.<sup>11</sup> The same can be said of Freud (in the words of one scholar “To put it very crudely, Freud needed a goy” [(Chapter 4, 114]) and many on the radical left (who often felt out of place in what was essentially a Jewish milieu; Chapter 3, 71–72).

So we may assume that Boas was quite happy to have Mead as the face of his movement. Both [Mead](#) and [Benedict](#) were sexual non-conformists (and lovers) and may well have been motivated mainly by their perception of American sexual mores as oppressive or by their perception that in general American society discriminated against women. Mead was also very ambitious and may well have seen Boas as someone who could promote her career—as indeed he did. I quote Benedict as saying we should study other cultures in order “to pass judgment on the dominant traits of our own civilization”—quite possibly a plea for tolerance for homosexuality.

In any case, I never claim that Mead and Benedict were Boas’s “puppets.” I do claim that Mead did shoddy, even dishonest work, citing several sources,

---

<sup>10</sup> Neil Gross and Ethan Fosse, “Why are professors liberal? *Theory and Society* 4 (2012): 127–168.

<sup>11</sup> John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 180.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

and that the Samoan society that emerges from these other sources is far more compatible with evolutionary perspectives on sexuality.

Cofnas moves on to my discussion of the role of Jews in creating a taboo on research on race differences: “MacDonald ignores the fact that influential gentiles have been well represented among environmentalists studying race differences in intelligence, and Jews have been clearly overrepresented among prominent hereditarians.” This distorts the view presented in Chapter 2. As a developmental psychologist and a theorist of culture from an evolutionary perspective, I have always accepted the [importance of environmental influence](#), and I noted that there are prominent Jews among hereditarians and non-Jews who are critics of hereditarian positions. I acknowledge

the very important contributions of these [Jewish] developmental psychobiologists and their emphasis on the role of the environment in behavioral development—a tradition that remains influential within developmental psychology in the writings of several theorists, including Alan Fogel, Richard Lerner, Arnold Sameroff, and Esther Thelen. Moreover, it must be recognized that several Jews have been important contributors to evolutionary thinking as it applies to humans as well as human behavioral genetics, including Daniel G. Freedman, Richard Herrnstein, Seymour Itzkoff [the editor of the Praeger series that included my trilogy], Irwin Silverman, Nancy Segal, Lionel Tiger, and Glenn Weisfeld. Of course, non-Jews have been counted among the critics of evolutionary-biological thinking. Nevertheless, the entire episode [surrounding the critique of Konrad Lorenz and ethology] clearly indicates that there are often important human interests that involve Jewish identity and that influence scientific debate. The suggestion here is that one consequence of Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy has been to skew these debates in a manner that has impeded progress in the biological and social sciences. (p. 38)

Notice that I included Richard Herrnstein in this list. Cofnas writes: “Instead of accepting that Herrnstein is an example that does not support his thesis, MacDonald spins the facts by implying that Herrnstein supported the theory of race differences in intelligence because it would promote his ethnic interests.”

Two points: I wrote that Herrnstein was “an important contributor to ... human behavior genetics.” And as I have said repeatedly, I am not claiming all Jews engaged in science identify strongly as Jews, or are on the same page as all other Jewish scientists, or seek to advance Jewish interests, or that all Jews are motivated by their Jewish identity in the same way. In the preface to the paperback edition I did indeed cite Alan Ryan to suggest that Herrnstein may have had a Jewish motivation, but notice how tentatively I phrase it:

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

In the case of one of those I mention, Richard J. Herrnstein, Alan Ryan (1994, 11) writes, “Herrnstein essentially wants the world in which clever Jewish kids or their equivalent make their way out of their humble backgrounds and end up running Goldman Sachs or the Harvard physics department.” This is a stance that is typical, I suppose, of neo-conservatism, a Jewish movement I discuss in several places, and it is the sort of thing that, if true, would suggest that Herrnstein did perceive the issues discussed in *The Bell Curve* as affecting Jewish interests in a way that Charles Murray, his co-author, did not.

I am not making a strong claim here. I certainly do not take Ryan’s comment as showing what Herrnstein’s motives were—only that *if true*, they would *suggest* that. Herrnstein’s case would require much more evidence to be included as an example suitable for *CofC*. Moreover, nothing rides on Herrnstein’s motives for doing what I regard as excellent research. In Chapter 2 he is listed as a prominent Jewish social scientist who does not fit the framework of *CofC*, and I am happy to leave it at that.

Regarding Cofnas’s list of prominent hereditarians, I accept that Jews have been prominent among hereditarians. The question is whether the actions of those who opposed hereditarian perspectives were the result of specifically Jewish identification and motivation and how effective they were in combatting hereditarianism. Nothing Cofnas says vitiates my claim that Stephen Jay Gould, Leon Kamin, Richard Lewontin, Richard Lerner, and Steven Rose (reinforced by academic activists like Jerry Hirsch’s protégé Barry Mehler who has been an effective force in combatting “academic racism”) were very influential. Chapter 2 has a long section on Gould’s Jewish identification, as well as his scientific malfeasance and even outright fraud. Gould’s vast influence is beyond question, not only in academia (where his books have often been used in courses) but also in the popular arena as a result of his 300 essays in *Natural History*. In addition to numerous academic honors and awards, he was named a [Living Legend](#) by the U.S. Library of Congress in 2000.

## CHAPTER 4: JEWISH INVOLVEMENT IN THE PSYCHOANALYTIC MOVEMENT

The thesis of Chapter 4:

The thesis of this chapter is that it is impossible to understand psychoanalysis as a “science,” or more properly as a political movement, without taking into account the role of Judaism. Sigmund Freud is a prime example of a Jewish social scientist whose writings were influenced by his Jewish identity and his negative attributions regarding gentile culture as the source of anti-Semitism.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Is Cofnas successful in refuting this thesis? Note that he does not challenge the basic thesis of the chapter that psychoanalysis was a Jewish movement (a common view among scholars), nor does he quarrel with the assertion that Freud had a strong Jewish identity and sense of pursuing Jewish interests by subverting gentile culture. Obviously, psychoanalysis was very influential.

Regarding the lists of prominent intellectuals influenced by psychoanalysis compiled by Kadushin and Torrey, Cofnas does not dispute that they were influenced by psychoanalysis (my point for bringing it up), but he claims that most of these people were not pursuing Jewish interests as defined by Cofnas: “five of these intellectuals are, by MacDonald’s criteria, unambiguously anti-Israel and therefore opposed to Jewish interests.” Again, support for Israel is not synonymous with how individual Jews perceive Jewish interests or whether or not Jewish interests are even relevant to their writing (see above), and this was certainly not the case prior to the establishment of Israel (see above).

Cofnas seems to think that I suppose that all Jews influenced by psychoanalysis are political radicals (“virtually none of them [the Jews on the list of prominent intellectuals] comes close to conforming to MacDonald’s paradigm of a Jewish radical.”) However, when I speak of psychoanalysis as generally linked to the left, I am not referring necessarily to the radical left. Even neoconservatism, with its roots on the Trotskyist left, has fundamentally acted to combat paleoconservatism and to move the American conservative movement to the left on key issues like immigration (see [“Neoconservatism as Jewish Movement”](#)). For example, I cite Samuel Francis: “There are countless stories of how neoconservatives have succeeded in entering conservative institutions, forcing out or demoting traditional conservatives, and changing the positions and philosophy of such institutions in neoconservative directions.”

Moreover, some neocons have been influenced by psychoanalysis. Cofnas emphasizes Saul Bellow and Alan Bloom, whom I discuss in the previously referenced article (see especially the quote from Francis and material on neocon attitudes toward immigration). Indeed, it’s interesting that there is an excellent fit between Bloom (and Leo Strauss) and the framework of *CofC*:

As depicted by Bellow [in his novel *Ravelstein*], Bloom emerges as the quintessential guru, surrounded by disciples—a “father” who attempts not only to direct his disciples’ careers but their personal lives as well.<sup>12</sup> His disciples are described as “clones who dressed as he did, smoked the same Marlboros”; they were heading toward “the Promised Land of the intellect toward which Ravelstein, their Moses and their Socrates, led them.”<sup>13</sup> “To be cut off from his informants in Washington and Paris, from his students, the people he had trained, the band of brothers, the initiates, the happy few

---

<sup>12</sup> Bellow 2000, 27.

<sup>13</sup> Bellow 2000, 56.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

made him extremely uncomfortable.”<sup>14</sup> Bloom in turn is depicted as a “disciple” of the Strauss character, Felix Davarr: “Ravelstein talked so much about him that in the end I was obliged to read some of his books. It had to be done if I was to understand what [Ravelstein] was all about.”<sup>15</sup>

Bloom’s Ravelstein is depicted as very self-consciously Jewish. ... there is the acute consciousness of who is a Jew and who isn’t; all of Ravelstein’s close friends are Jews. There is an intense interest in whether non-Jews dislike Jews or have connections to fascism. And there is a fixation on the Holocaust and when it will happen again: “They kill more than half of the European Jews. ... There’s no telling which corner it will come from next.”<sup>16</sup> Ravelstein thought of Jews as displacing WASPs: He “liked to think of living in one of the tony flat buildings formerly occupied by the exclusively WASP faculty.”<sup>17</sup>

So yes, neocons may have a psychoanalytic background (like Bellow and Bloom) and also be strongly identified Jews who are motivated by anti-WASP animus (for further examples of the latter, see [my review](#) of Jacob Heilbrunn’s *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neocons*). Moreover, the fact that Bellow and Bloom turned out to be neocons does not vitiate the data presented in Chapters 4 and 5 indicating that psychoanalysis was in general a creature (and tool) of the left. Trust me. I was in Madison during the 1960s (see “[Memories of Madison](#)“ and Chapter 3 of *CofC*, note 13).

Cofnas: “It is ironic that MacDonald casts Robert Silvers as a part of a nefarious Jewish Freudian movement” given that *NYRB* published Frederick Crews’ takedown of Freud and the psychoanalytic movement.” I’m not sure what got into Silvers to publish Crews, but note should also be made of Crews’ later comment that this was entirely anomalous and does not detract from the general influence of the *NYRB* in promoting psychoanalysis:

Publication in the *NYRB*, as Crews notes, is “almost like pet owners who had negligently or maliciously consigned their parakeet to the mercies of an ever-lurking cat” (Crews et al. 1995, 288). The implication is that publications like the *NYRB* and the other journals associated with the New York Intellectuals have been instrumental in propagating psychoanalytic and similar doctrines as scientifically and intellectually reputable for decades.

---

<sup>14</sup> Bellow 2000, 103.

<sup>15</sup> Bellow 2000, 101.

<sup>16</sup> Bellow 2000, 174.

<sup>17</sup> Bellow 2000, 61.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Cofnas claims that an incident in which Freud criticized the Jewish role in a 1929 confrontation between Jews and Arabs at the Western Wall in then-Palestine “undermines MacDonald’s caricature of Freud as a monomaniacal activist dedicated to excusing Jewish behavior and pathologizing anti-Semitism.” But it certainly doesn’t undermine the basic thesis of the chapter that Freud had a strong Jewish identity and sense of Jewish interests in promoting psychoanalysis. Cofnas acknowledges that Freud had a Jewish identity, “if only because was continually reminded of it by anti-Semites.” But it would seem to be much deeper than that:

In a 1931 letter he described himself as “a fanatical Jew,” and on another occasion he wrote that he found “the attraction of Judaism and of Jews so irresistible, many dark emotional powers, all the mightier the less they let themselves be grasped in words, as well as the clear consciousness of inner identity, the secrecy of the same mental construction” (in Gay 1988, 601). On another occasion he wrote of “strange secret longings” related to his Jewish identity (in Gay 1988, 601). … Gay (1988, 601) interprets Freud as having the belief that his identity as a Jew was the result of his phylogenetic heritage [shaped in a LaMarckian manner by Jewish history]. … Freud and his colleagues felt a sense of “racial kinship” with their Jewish colleagues and a “racial strangeness” to others (Klein 1981, 142; see also Gilman 1993, 12ff).

Freud’s hostility to Western culture is legendary as is his sense that psychoanalysis would end anti-Semitism and subvert the sexual mores of his day. For example:

[Freud] was proud of his enemies—the persecuting Roman Catholic Church, the hypocritical bourgeoisie, the obtuse psychiatric establishment, the materialistic Americans—so proud, indeed, that they grew in his mind into potent specters far more malevolent and far less divided than they were in reality. He likened himself to Hannibal, to Ahasuerus, to Joseph, to Moses, all men with historic missions, potent adversaries, and difficult fates. (Gay 1988, 604) …

[Freud] wrote of his messianic hope to achieve the “integration of Jews and anti-Semites on the soil of [psychoanalysis]” (in Gay 1988, 231), a quote clearly indicating that psychoanalysis was viewed by its founder as a mechanism for ending anti-Semitism.

“[Freud] was convinced that it was in the very nature of psychoanalytic doctrine to appear shocking and subversive.” … Peter Gay labels Freud’s

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

work generally as “subversive” (1987, 140), his sexual ideology in particular as “deeply subversive for his time” (p. 148), and he describes his *Totem and Taboo* as containing “subversive conjectures” (p. 327) in its analysis of culture.

In conjunction with the other material in the chapter, I don’t need any more evidence to show that Freud fits the mold of Jewish intellectuals involved in the movements I review in *CofC*. I also note that “at least by 1930 Freud also became strongly sympathetic with Zionism,” indicating that his acknowledgement of a role for Jews in perhaps provoking the 1929 incident does not preclude a general attachment to Zionism as an aspect of his Jewish identity. Like many Zionists today, he may have thought that Jewish confrontations with the Arabs motivated by the “unrealistic fanaticism of our people” were not a good strategy for Jews to pursue—exactly the argument that John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt make in *The Israel Lobby* as well as many Jewish critics of Israel who would call themselves Zionists but who advocate peace and accommodation with the Palestinians. Obviously battling Arabs in the streets of Jerusalem was far from the only strategy Zionists used; Freud may well have thought other options would be more productive.

### **CHAPTER 5: THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL**

Cofnas:

MacDonald emphasizes “the double standard in which gentile behavior inferred from high scores on the F-scale or the Ethnocentrism Scales is viewed as an indication of psychopathology, whereas precisely the same behavior is central to Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy” (1988a:168). But nowhere does he present evidence that Adorno et al. approved of this behavior in Jews, which is what would be necessary for them to have a “double standard.” MacDonald just assumes that they approve of this behavior because they were Jewish.

I do not assume they approve this behavior simply because they were Jewish. The first part of the chapter goes into detail on the strong Jewish identifications of the principle figures, and it is noteworthy that the group’s most influential work, *The Authoritarian Personality*, was funded and published by the American Jewish Committee which is dedicated to advancing Jewish interests. Regarding Jewish identity, Max Horkheimer (1947, 161) stated that the goal of philosophy must to be vindicate Jewish history: “The anonymous martyrs of the concentration camps are the symbols of humanity that is striving to be born. The task of philosophy is to translate what they have done into language that will be heard, even though their finite voices have been silenced by tyranny.” Adorno: “much of Adorno’s later work may be viewed as a reaction to the Holocaust, as

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

typified by his famous comment that ‘to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric’ (Adorno 1967, 34) and his question ‘whether after Auschwitz you can go on living—especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed’ (Adorno 1973, 363). Tar (1977, 158) notes that the point of the former comment is that ‘no study of sociology could be possible without reflecting on Auschwitz and without concerning oneself with preventing new Auschwitzes.’”

It’s reasonable to assume on the basis of this that Jewish identity, Jewish commitment, and the importance of Jewish continuity were much on the mind of Frankfurt School luminaries—ethnocentrism by any other name. Cofnas seems to think that I can’t make my argument without explicit statements by Frankfurt School authors to the effect that Jewish ethnocentrism is perfectly fine but the ethnocentrism of non-Jews is a pathology. But why would they do that? There are really two possibilities here: they realized it was a double standard but didn’t want to publicize that for the obvious reason that they would be seen as hypocrites. Or they were deceiving themselves by simply focusing on White ethnocentrism as pathological while blocking out any thought about how this presents an intellectual inconsistency—i.e., self-deception.

The latter is a real possibility. I wrote a [chapter](#) on self-deception in *Separation and Its Discontents*, noting ethnocentric people are particularly prone to self-deception on issues related to their ethnic group. This material has since been expanded and updated by Andrew Joyce for his forthcoming volume, *Talmud and Taboo* (earlier online version [here](#)). The reason why I think self-deception is a real possibility is Horkheimer and Adorno’s (1944/1990) *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (discussed [here](#), 160ff). The theory of anti-Semitism presented there is so obviously bizarre, so obviously propaganda, so completely outside of any scientific sensibility of the need to find supporting data, and so completely devoid of any attempt at doing historical research on the causes of anti-Jewish attitudes that it’s hard to believe anyone could conceive of it without an element of self-deception. Within this theory, “the continuation and acceptance of Jewish particularism becomes a precondition for the development of a utopian society of the future”—a society free of anti-Jewish attitudes because the pathology of anti-Semitism has been eradicated. In a psychoanalytic *tour de force*, the pathology of anti-Semitism is conceived as resulting from the suppression of nature resulting in projections of various kinds (e.g., “The forbidden action which is converted into aggression [against Jews] is generally homosexual in nature. Through fear of castration, obedience to the father is taken to the extreme of an anticipation of castration in conscious emotional approximation to the nature of a small girl, and actual hatred to the father is suppressed.”)

Thus the behavior of Jews is completely irrelevant to anti-Semitism. Judaism would continue as it always had, as a group apart, while non-Jews would overcome anti-Jewish attitudes by emulating the supposed Jewish embrace of the natural: “Happiness without power, wages without work, a home without

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

frontiers, religion without myth. These characteristics are hated by the rulers because the ruled secretly long to possess them. The rulers are only safe as long as the people they rule turn their longed-for goals into hated forms of evil.”

Of course, deception is also a possibility. Take your pick. But whatever your choice, I think it’s safe to say that the Frankfurt School did indeed have a double standard on ethnocentrism, implicitly if not explicitly. While the above makes clear that Judaism would continue after the utopian society is achieved, the same cannot be said for the group identifications of non-Jews. Thus, “in Horkheimer’s essay on German Jews (see Horkheimer 1974), the true enemy of the Jews is gentile collectivities of any kind, and especially nationalism.”

Confas then provides two examples of my alleged misrepresentation of sources. Because of the length my comments on this, I have placed them in an appendix.

Cofnas goes on to claim that there is no “positive evidence for my claim that the Frankfurt School members were engaging in “‘cryspsis’—members of the Frankfurt School “conceal[ed] their Jewish identities . . . [and] engage[d] in massive self-deception.” And he complains about my claim that Jewish intellectual movements “typically [occur] in an atmosphere of Jewish crypsis or semi-crypsis in the sense that the Jewish political agenda [is] not an aspect of the theory and the theories themselves [have] no overt Jewish content” He then brings up Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse as counter-examples because both were critical of Israel.

I don’t see how anything Cofnas writes rebuts my claim that explicit Jewish identities and political interests are not an aspect of the theories I discuss—that the theories have no overt Jewish content. Was the Frankfurt School ideology that gentile ethnocentrism was the result of disturbed parent-child relations somehow specifically Jewish, e.g., explicitly linked to Jewish religious writings or traditional Jewish ethics? Was Freud’s Oedipal complex an explicitly Jewish proposal, applying, say, only to Jewish families?

I have already discussed the self-deception issue with regard to the Frankfurt School, as well as the point that support for Israel is not synonymous with having a strong sense of Jewish identity or sense of Jewish interests. Jews are not monolithic, and both Fromm and Marcuse grew up at a time when Zionism was not a majority view in the Jewish community for the very Jewish reason that it was thought to be dangerous because of accusations of disloyalty. Today many strongly identified Jews who are basically sympathetic to Zionism believe that Israeli actions are reckless and evil, and there is even an [Haredi Jewish group](#), Neturei Karta, that is utterly opposed to Zionism for (Jewish) religious reasons. Do they therefore reject a Jewish identity and a sense of Jewish interests? Different Jews have different ideas of what Jewish interests are.

The important thing, as always, is to see where the power and influence lie at any particular time. Obviously, the views of Fromm, Marcuse (and Neturei Karta) have little influence at this time.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Also, regarding Fromm, in Chapter 4 I cite evidence that he “had a very strong Jewish identity (Marcus & Tar 1986, 348–350; Wiggershaus 1994, 52ff) and [like the radicals discussed in Chapter 3] he very self-consciously attempted to use psychoanalysis to further a radical political agenda.”

Finally, nothing that Cofnas writes, even if correct, vitiates the devastating conclusions I make about *The Authoritarian Personality* (p. 185ff). Taken as a whole, the book indeed created an upside-down world, enabled by psychoanalysis (“Psychoanalysis essentially allowed the authors to make up any story they wanted”). It was a world in which adaptive behavior in non-Jews was presented as pathological and disturbed parent-child relations were seen as a good thing because they led to rebellious children who would reject their parents’ culture. I stand by my conclusion that it is a theory that “attempts to alter gentile culture in a manner that benefits Judaism by portraying gentile group loyalties (including nationalism, Christian religious affiliation, close family relationships, high-investment parenting, and concern with social and material success) as indicators of psychiatric disorder.”

Beginning in the 1950s Jewish organizations were very active in promoting the Frankfurt School view that “negative attitudes toward groups were … not … the result of competing group interests but rather … the result of individual psychopathology (Svonkin 1997, 75). … While gentile ethnocentrism was viewed as a public health problem, the [American Jewish Congress, which funded much of this activism] fought against Jewish assimilation” (p. 259).

### CHAPTER 3: JEWS AND THE LEFT

In many ways, Jewish activism in the political arena on the left (that is, apart from purely intellectual movements) is the most important arena of Jewish influence, with huge ramifications in a wide range of countries, certainly including the United States and other Western societies, but also the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Jewish role in Bolshevism is particularly important, and I have added to the material in Chapter 3 in the [Preface to the Paperback Edition](#) and in [my review](#) of Yuri Slezkine’s *The Jewish Century*, focusing particularly on the immense consequences of Jewish radicalism in the twentieth century, a topic that was not emphasized in *CofC* with its focus on Jewish identity. This material gives further support to the thesis of Chapter 3 that in general Jews on the left retained their Jewish identity, sense of pursuing Jewish interests, and their central role on the left during the twentieth century.

Cofnas begins by complaining about my treatment of Karl Marx (see above for further comments on Marx suggesting that he did indeed fit the mold of the type of intellectual reviewed discussed in *CofC*).<sup>18</sup> In any case, in Chapter 3 I note:

---

<sup>18</sup> I admit the citation to Jacob Katz is screwed up and am investigating. I greatly admire Katz as a historian and suspect I cited the wrong book. This sort of thing happens to everyone.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Whatever Marx's views on the subject [of Jewish identification and group continuity], a critical question in the following is whether acceptance of radical, universalist ideologies and participation in radical, universalist movements are compatible with Jewish identification.

In other words, Marx's views are not germane to the topic of the chapter.

Cofnas argues against my comments on Richard Pipes regarding the issue of Jewish underrepresentation in nationalist movements, even if they are anti-Semitic:

First, anti-Semitic nationalist movements generally targeted Jews regardless of their self-identity. Jews who identified as "Russian" or "Polish" would still have been discouraged, if not outright prohibited, from joining these movements as equal participants. Second, even "de-ethnicized" Jews might find it difficult to accept anti-Semitic caricatures of Jews due simply to their close contact with Jewish family and former friends.

First, earlier in the chapter, I note Pipes' claim that "Bolsheviks of Jewish background in the czarist period did not identify as Jews, although they were perceived by gentiles as acting on behalf of Jewish interests and were subjected to anti-Semitism." I agreed that, under such circumstances, it would be hard for such a person not to identify as a Jew on some level. For one thing, as I note, anti-Semitism tends to increase Jewish identification. Secondly, the views of anti-Jewish nationalists need not have been "caricatures" but rather more or less accurate conceptions of Jewish behavior. Given the vast overrepresentation of Jews among their enemies, it would have been natural not to trust someone with a Jewish background who offered to participate in a nationalist movement. In fact, Jews generally opposed national cultures throughout Eastern Europe during the period ([here](#), pp. 73–76)—anti-Jewish or not, and often in leadership positions: "their love of cultural icons transcended national and ethnic boundaries in an age of popular nationalism." Indeed, Jewish lack of attachment to national cultures has been a theme of anti-Semitism throughout the centuries, beginning with the Book of Exodus ([here](#), 60–70), and extending to perceptions of European Jews in the early twentieth century ([here](#), p. 142) and to concern that Jewish [neoconservatives](#) are more loyal to Israel than the United States.

But in any case—and this is the critical point, Jewish overrepresentation in anti-nationalist movements cannot be explained simply by Jewish IQ, etc.

---

Cofnas has an incorrect link to his citation of Alan Dershowitz, and repeatedly refers to *CofC* as published in 1988 in the body of the article, although he gets it right in the references.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Cofnas claims that “For MacDonald, having a strong Jewish identity appears to be the only reason not to support anti-Semitic movements,” citing this example from Chapter 3:

The [Soviet-German] nonaggression pact provoked a great deal of rationalization on the part of Jewish CPUSA [Communist Party USA] members, often involving an attempt to interpret the Soviet Union’s actions as actually benefiting Jewish interests—clearly an indication that these individuals had not given up their Jewish identities. Others continued to be members but silently opposed the party’s line because of their Jewish loyalties (1988a:73)<sup>19</sup>.

It seems to me that, if the issue is being evaluated in terms of whether or not it benefits Jewish interests rather than the interests of the country as a whole, this evident rationalization makes my point. However, the other example cited by Cofnas is indeed unclear exactly what the motives of the Jewish-Polish communists were. But this is cherry-picking. If read in the context of the entire section (pp. 60–68), the Jewish identifications of these communists come through clearly, so it becomes implausible that their concern about the nonaggression pact was unrelated to their Jewish identity when Jewish identity was so salient in other areas. The same can be said for Jewish involvement in the Communist Party–USA (CPUSA; see p. 72ff). For example:

In the following years [i.e., after 1925 when there was a “mass exodus” of Jews from the party after ethnic sections were abolished], Jewish support for the CPUSA rose and fell depending on party support for specific Jewish issues. During the 1930s the CPUSA changed its position and took great pains to appeal to specific Jewish interests, including a primary focus against anti-Semitism, supporting Zionism and eventually Israel, and advocating the importance of maintaining Jewish cultural traditions. As in Poland during this period, “The American radical movement glorified the development of Jewish life in the Soviet Union. . . . The Soviet Union was living proof that under socialism the Jewish question could be solved” (Kann 1981, 152–153). Communism was thus perceived as “good for Jews.” Despite temporary problems caused by the Soviet-German nonaggression pact of 1939, the result was an end to the CPUSA’s isolation from the [mainstream] Jewish community during World War II and the immediate postwar years. (p. 73)

Finally, Cofnas makes the following criticism:

---

<sup>19</sup> In several places, as here, Cofnas cites *CofC* as having been published in 1988. It was published in 1998.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

MacDonald leaves out a key fact noted by Schatz ([1991](#):225), which is that 40% of the *victims* of the secret police were Jewish. Since the Jewish population of Poland at the time was minuscule (less than half of 1% of the population in 1949; see Schatz [1991](#):208), Jews were extremely disproportionately likely to be *attacked* by the security service. These data are more consistent with the thesis that Jews were simply more likely to be in positions of power—more likely to be in the position to persecute others, and more likely to be perceived as rivals by those in power, so more likely to be persecuted. There is no convincing evidence supporting the tale of Jews qua Jews victimizing gentiles for revenge on a significant scale.

Unfortunately, Schatz doesn't explain why Jews were targeted by the security forces. However, in making this claim, Schatz cites an article by Włodzimierz Rozenbaum titled "The Background of the Anti-Zionist Campaign of 1967–68 in Poland" (*Essays in History* 17 (1972–1973): 70–96). I have ordered this item from the library and will revise this section as needed. However Rozenbaum covers the same topic with a similarly titled article [here](#). Quite clearly, Jews were being targeted by the security forces because their Zionist sympathies conflicted with the foreign policy of the Soviet bloc (disloyalty) but also because the situation provided an opportunity for Polish leader Władysław Gomulka to purge Jews from positions of power and thus consolidate his own power:

Israeli victories, even before they were acknowledged in the media, brought some relief to most Jews in Poland. Many did not hide their happiness, although they were understandably restrained in demonstrating it. ....

The pro-Israeli sympathies in Poland were known to the authorities. Reportedly, even the Soviet leaders were aware of them and this issue was mentioned during the summit meeting in Moscow. Thus, in the case of Gomulka, the signing of the anti-Israeli declaration was not just the usual bow in the Kremlin's direction. An anti-Zionist campaign in Poland was meant to have serious domestic implications. Gomulka was obviously concerned about the anti-Soviet overtones permeating pro-Israeli sympathies in Poland. But he also must have seen other very important political advantages, namely an opportunity to deal openly and decisively with the Jewish problem which could bring him even greater control over the party leadership.

Thus the targeting of Jews was done because of (or on the pretext of) their Zionist sympathies, not because of opposition to communism per se. Indeed, in general, Jews had been staunch supporters of the regime and were overrepresented in leadership positions, although less so than in the immediate

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

post-World War II era. Nevertheless, I note that in the 1950s there was a relatively minor purge in which Jews may have been targeted by the security forces:

Khrushchev himself supported a new policy with his remark that “you have already too many Abramoviches” (in Schatz 1991, 272). Even this first stage in the anti-Jewish purges was accompanied by anti-Semitic incidents among the public at large, as well as demands that Jewish communists who had changed their names to lower their profile in the party reveal themselves. As a result of these changes over half of Polish Jews responded by emigrating to Israel between 1956 and 1959.

The purge in the 1950s, like [similar purges](#) in the USSR during this period, occurred because Jews were seen as having too much power.

In neither of these purges were Jews being targeted because they were Polish nationalists who, after all, were by far the most important targets of the regime throughout the entire period:

When this group [i.e., “the generation” of Jewish communists] came to power after the war, they advanced Soviet political, economic, and cultural interests in Poland while aggressively pursuing specifically Jewish interests, including the destruction of the nationalist political opposition whose openly expressed anti-Semitism derived at least partly from the fact that Jews were perceived as favoring Soviet domination. The purge of Wladyslaw Gomulka’s group shortly after the war resulted in the promotion of Jews and the complete banning of anti-Semitism. Moreover, the general opposition between the Jewish-dominated Polish communist government supported by the Soviets and the nationalist, anti-Semitic underground helped forge the allegiance of the great majority of the Jewish population to the communist government while the great majority of non-Jewish Poles favored the anti-Soviet parties (Schatz 1991, 204–205). (65)

If there is one thing Jews have learned, it’s that no system of government is guaranteed to be resistant to anti-Jewish attitudes. Similarly, after being a dominant elite in the Soviet Union beginning with the Bolshevik Revolution and extending at least well into the 1930s (and really until after World War II), [Jewish power declined, Jews were purged from positions of power, and Jews ultimately became leaders of the refusenik movement](#) aimed at being able to emigrate from the USSR.

Moreover, Schatz is quite clear that the criteria for acceptance into the security forces had to do with Jewish issues:

To begin with, there was the basic fact of the general society’s hostility toward the regime and the latter’s need for trusted cadres. Old communists,

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

among them the generation [i.e., the core group of Jewish communists central to the Polish Communist Party since before World War II] had to be relied on as the core. They were joined by other Jews who were not pre-war communists, but whom the regime could rely on because of their sympathies for the new political system and because of their isolation and exposed position in the wider society. (225)

Thus, because of anti-Jewish attitudes in the wider society (at least partly due to the perception that Jews were vastly more likely to favor the hated communist government than Poles and because of their prominent positions in the government), they were disproportionately likely to be recruited. The same goes for other positions in the government (see pp. 67–68; e.g.: “Jews who had severed formal ties with the Jewish community, or who had changed their names to Polish-sounding names, or who could pass as Poles because of their physical appearance or lack of a Jewish accent were favored in promotions”).

Finally, Cofnas never comes close to refuting the fundamental thesis of the chapter—that Jewish radicals retained their Jewish identity and sense of pursuing Jewish interests.

### **CHAPTER 7: “JEWISH INVOLVEMENT IN SHAPING U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY”**

As noted above, writing the chapter on immigration was a game-changer for me because the policies inaugurated by the 1965 immigration law and similar laws throughout the West have resulted in demographic transformations that will make the Western peoples minorities in lands they have dominated for hundreds, and in the case of Europe, for thousands of years.

My view that individual influential Jews and Jewish organizations were the most influential force—a necessary condition—for the passage of the law has received support from historians Hugh Davis Graham and Otis Graham who emphasize the importance of Jewish influence in the executive branch of the government (I focused on Congress). This is how Hugh Davis Graham summarized it in his 2002 book *Collision Course* (pp. 56–57):

Most important for the content of immigration reform, the driving force at the core of the movement, reaching back to the 1920s, were Jewish organizations long active in opposing racial and ethnic quotas. These included the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, and the American Federation of Jews from Eastern Europe. Jewish members of the Congress, particularly representatives from New York and Chicago, had maintained steady but largely ineffective pressure against the national origins quotas since the 1920s. . . . Following the shock of the Holocaust, Jewish leaders had been especially active in Washington in furthering immigration reform. To the public, the most visible evidence of the immigration reform drive was

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

played by Jewish legislative leaders, such as Representative Cellar and Senator Jacob Javits of New York. Less visible, but equally important, were the efforts of key advisers on presidential and agency staffs. These included senior policy advisers such as Julius Edelson and Harry Rosenfield in the Truman administration, Maxwell Rabb in the Eisenhower White House, and presidential aide Myer Feldman, assistant secretary of state Abba Schwartz, and deputy attorney general Norbert Schlei in the Kennedy-Johnson administration.

The most important point here is that Cofnas does not dispute the central role of Jews and Jewish organizations in passage of the immigration law of 1965.

Cofnas begins by complaining about my treatment of John Dewey: MacDonald “argues that Dewey was being manipulated by his less famous, albeit Jewish, student, Sidney Hook.” However, I did mention that Hook was Dewey’s student and never said that Dewey was being “manipulated,” only that he was being promoted by an intellectual who achieved a great deal of prominence and influence as a New York Intellectual (I discuss the New York Intellectuals in Chapter 6, including material on Hook’s strong Jewish identity and sense of pursuing Jewish interests). I have no doubt that Dewey was sincere in his beliefs—beliefs that were very attractive to the Jewish intellectual ascendency. The same goes for Cofnas’s assertion that I claim that Margaret Mead was a “puppet” of Boas. As indicated above, I have no doubt that her beliefs were sincere.

Cofnas’s treatment of my comments on Dewey ignores my citations of David Hollinger, perhaps the premier historian of U.S. intellectual history. “Hollinger (1996, 4) notes “the transformation of the ethnoreligious demography of American academic life by Jews,” and specifically with respect to Dewey:

“If lapsed Congregationalists like Dewey did not need immigrants to inspire them to press against the boundaries of even the most liberal of Protestant sensibilities, Dewey’s kind were resoundingly encouraged in that direction by the Jewish intellectuals they encountered in urban academic and literary communities” (Hollinger 1996, 24).

While Jews promoted people like Dewey whose views resonated with theirs, they worked to destroy the reputations of intellectuals whose views they disapproved. In particular, Jewish intellectuals were successful in opposing the work of populist intellectuals and artists (discussed in Chapter 5 and in my review of Eric Kaufmann mentioned above). Andrew Joyce and Brenton Sanderson have made major contributions in this area, with essays on Jewish attempts to destroy the reputations of [T. S. Eliot](#), [Robinson Jeffers](#), [Ezra Pound](#), and [Richard Wagner](#). On the other hand, Jewish intellectual activism has been central in promoting the work not only of the intellectuals reviewed in *CofC*, but also the reputation of

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

[Baruch Spinoza](#) who is now being promoted by Jewish academic activists as the philosopher without whom the Enlightenment never would have happened.

Regarding Cofnas's comments on Madison Grant, he was indeed a Nordicist advocating for people like himself—an attitude that is certainly not foreign to Jews. However, to claim that “Jews were effectively *promoting*, not undermining, white unity” (his emphasis) is a stretch to say the least. Even during the 1920s and before (e.g., unanimous opposition in the Jewish press to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882; see p. 283), Jews promoted immigration from all of humanity.

In 1920 the Central Conference of American Rabbis passed a resolution urging that “the Nation . . . keep the gates of our beloved Republic open . . . to the oppressed and distressed of all mankind in conformity with its historic role as a haven of refuge for all men and women who pledge allegiance to its laws” (in *The American Hebrew*, Oct. 1, 1920, 594). *The American Hebrew* (Feb. 17, 1922, 373), a publication founded in 1867, to represent the German-Jewish establishment of the period, reiterated its long-standing policy that it “has always stood for the admission of worthy immigrants of all classes, irrespective of nationality.” And in his testimony at the 1924 hearings before the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, the AJCommittee’s Louis Marshall stated that the bill echoed the sentiments of the Ku Klux Klan; he characterized it as inspired by the racialist theories of Houston Stewart Chamberlain. At a time when the population of the United States was over 100 million, Marshall stated, “[W]e have room in this country for ten times the population we have”; he advocated admission of all of the peoples of the world without quota limit, excluding only those who “were mentally, morally and physically unfit, who are enemies of organized government, and who are apt to become public charges.” Similarly, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, representing the AJCongress and a variety of other Jewish organizations at the House Hearings, asserted “the right of every man outside of America to be considered fairly and equitably and without discrimination.”

Far from promoting “White unity,” Jewish activists were promoting making Whites a small minority in a country that they had established and dominated for 150 years.

Cofnas claims that I am incorrect in attributing “hypocrisy” to American Jews because they support immigration and diversity in the U.S. but not Israel in Chapter 8. However, I never mention hypocrisy in that chapter but am only interested in describing the “disparities” in policies advocated by Jews in the two countries. This is the quotation (from Chapter 8) that Cofnas is disputing (including additional material in order to clarify the context):

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Notice that American Jews have had no interest in proposing that immigration to Israel should be similarly multiethnic, or that Israel should have an immigration policy that would threaten the hegemony of Jews. I rather doubt that Oscar Handlin (1952, 7) would extend his statement advocating immigration from all ethnic groups into the United States by affirming the principle that all men, being brothers, are equally capable of being Israelis. I also doubt that the Synagogue Council of America would characterize Israeli immigration law as “a gratuitous affront to the peoples of many regions of the world” (PCIN 1953, 117). Indeed, the ethnic conflict within Israel indicates a failure to develop a universalist Western culture.

I go on to discuss the “disparities” (not hypocrisy) between attitudes toward immigration of American Jews versus Israeli Jews. The simplest explanation of this disparity is that in general Jewish perceptions of their interests differ dramatically depending on whether they are a solid majority of a country or a small minority. What’s good for the Jews depends on context—hardly surprising.

Regarding immigration to Israel, Cofnas writes:

the claim that immigration to Israel is restricted to Jews—even nominal Jews—was and is false. Since 1970, Israel will give automatic citizenship to anyone with one Jewish grandparent *and their non-Jewish spouse and children* (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs [2013](#)). Hundreds of thousands of gentiles were granted Israeli citizenship because of this policy (Felter [2009](#)). (An exact estimate is difficult to give since Israelis with no Jewish ancestors, or only a distant one, may identify as Jewish in surveys.)

Jewish immigrants to Israel [must establish](#) their “Jewish roots” which typically involves documentation of family history. Recently there was a rabbinic ruling that Ashkenazi Jews could use DNA to prove that they are Jews, a particular problem for Jews who emigrated from the former Soviet Union. Imagine a U.S. law that allowed only people of who could establish a European family history and their spouses and children to immigrate to the U.S. and allowed the use of genetic testing to confirm European ancestry. I may be going out on a limb here, but I’m thinking every Jewish organization in America would be up in arms.

Realize also that historically, marriage in Israel has been controlled by the Orthodox rabbinate. A [2013 law](#) liberalized marriage somewhat, but there is still an Orthodox monopoly on marriage and divorce in Israel, and converts still [suffer some disabilities](#), mainly because non-Orthodox conversions are not recognized:

Some Israeli supporters of marriage liberalization remained skeptical despite the passage of the law.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

“The law won’t help more than 300,000 immigrants who are defined [under Israeli law] as ‘without religion.’ It also won’t help Reform and Conservative converts who are recognized as Jews by the state, but not by the rabbinate,” noted Rabbi Uri Regev, a Reform rabbi and director of Hiddush, a group advocating an end to the Orthodox monopoly in Israel’s state rabbinate.

Regarding Alan Dershowitz’s advocacy of Ethiopian migration to Israel: again, different Jews see Jewish interests differently. Some Jewish advocates for Ethiopian migration may see refusal to admit Ethiopians as indicating Israeli policy is racist and that it would destroy the idea that Judaism is simply a matter of religious belief—both of which would tend to give Israel a poor image in the West which is a vital pillar of support for Israel. As I have repeatedly noted here, one has to look at where the power is and pay close attention to divisions within the Jewish community. Moreover, using Cofnas’s estimates, Ethiopian Jews constitute only a little over 2% of the population and thus may not be seen as a serious threat to the demographic status quo. And it’s worth pointing out that Ethiopian Jews have not been welcomed by many Israelis and remain on the [fringes](#) of Israeli society. A [BBC report from 2015](#): “when they arrived in Israel, these distinctive people faced appalling discrimination, racism and a lack of empathy for their hardships in Ethiopia and during their journey to Israel. … Many in the religious establishment even dared to question their Judaism”; see also [here](#) and [here](#)).

Finally, I acknowledge very high intermarriage rates for Jews in the U.S. and that my projections of the Jewish demographic future in America, made 20 years ago on the basis of my reading, are not holding up. However, this should be placed in context. These trends do not signal the death knell of ethnic Judaism. First, a major goal of Zionism during the early decades of the twentieth century was to prevent intermarriage and assimilation ([here](#), p. 157), and in large measure that has succeeded in Israel. Secondly, to my knowledge, the leadership of the American Jewish community remains ethnically Jewish. Third, intermarriage and conversion have benefits for the Jewish community (e.g., [here](#)), including the advantages of marrying into prominent non-Jewish families, such as the families of presidents Trump and Clinton—a [centuries-old phenomenon](#). Some authors have suggested that relatively high rates of intermarriage, low fertility, and the various levels of Jewish identification in the modern Western societies are highly functional for Judaism because they serve as a bridge to the surrounding culture because of family ties with non-Jews.<sup>20</sup> Finally, there remains a highly fertile core of Conservative and Orthodox Jews who reject intermarriage.

---

<sup>20</sup> For example, Lieberman, S., & M. Weinfeld (1978). Demographic trends and Jewish survival. *Midstream* 24 (November): 9–19.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

### COFNAS'S CONCLUSION

Cofnas: “After arguing so strenuously that liberal movements were designed to advance a Jewish group evolutionary strategy, he acknowledges that Jews are also in the vanguard in the fight against those same movements.” As noted above in discussion of the history of Jews under communism, no political system is guaranteed to serve Jewish interests, and I have written about the [concern](#) within the organized Jewish community over the immigration of groups that may not resonate with Jewish issues, particularly Muslims. As always, the Jewish community will respond to problems as they arise. In the case of Poland and the Soviet Union, that meant large-scale emigration, and [Jewish emigration](#) from France and other European countries because of Muslim anti-Semitism is already a reality.

Cofnas notes that several Jews are prominent in evolutionary psychology and as critics of “liberal social science.” This in no way invalidates anything in *CofC*. As noted above, there have always been Jews who do good work in the social sciences. However, I should say that I disagree with Pinker’s orthodox version of evolutionary psychology (“massive modularity”) in favor of emphasizing how modular and non-modular mechanisms work together to [create human culture](#). And for obvious reasons I have a particular complaint because of his anti-scientific approach to my work—in part responsible for my spending the last 20 years in the intellectual wilderness. Nevertheless, Pinker has moved the scientific and popular reception of behavior genetics of evolutionary perspectives forward (see., e. g., his withering criticism in *The Blank Slate* of three pf the figures discussed in Chapter 2 of *CofC*: Gould, Lewontin and Rose). And, for all I know, he is pursuing a tactical strategy of gradualism by supporting ideas that are still regarded with extreme hostility in large swaths of academia and the media in the hopes that things will eventually change, although his recent work, [Enlightenment Now](#) is not encouraging in that regard.

The rest of Cofnas’s conclusion is simply name-calling. No need to respond.

### DISCUSSION

Perhaps the most important message here is that the successful Jewish attack on Darwinism by the Jewish intellectual movements discussed in *CoC* was a pivotal moment in intellectual history, with ramifications still being felt in psychology, anthropology, sociology, criminology, gender studies, political science, and political activism on the left generally—including, in particular, immigration policy. Anti-Darwinism is really the intellectual force field that protects the whole leftist-postmodern-multiculturalist worldview and gives it a veneer of scientific credibility because it is promulgated from the most prestigious academic and media sources—a key to the success of all the movements discussed in *CofC* (see especially Chapter 6).

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

With vanishingly few exceptions, every single person in evolutionary psychology and behavior genetics has suffered personal and career costs because of this assault on Darwinism. To the academics reading this, when was the last time your psychology department advertised for a specialist in behavior genetics? When was the last time your gender or ethnic studies departments advertised for specialists in evolutionary approaches to race or sex differences? This has had the effect of limiting job opportunities for those who aspire to careers in these fields, and it prevents talented faculty fortunate to have a position from moving to more prestigious institutions.

Fundamentally, this dominant zeitgeist of the left denies the biological reality of race and sex differences and the heritability of important mental traits like IQ. I vividly recall a conversation during the 1990s with J. Philippe Rushton, who produced ground-breaking theories and research on race differences, life history theory as applied to humans, and the importance of genetic similarity for friendship, mate choice, and other examples of human assortment.<sup>21</sup> He asked: Why do we (i.e., the academic establishment) know so much less about race and race differences now than we did in the 1920s? Why has research and theorizing in this area become taboo to the point that careers are ruined, and many academics engage in self-censorship to preserve their jobs, their career prospects, and their social life? *CofC* and my subsequent writing (e.g., [here](#)) are an attempt to answer that.

At this time there is enormous interest centering around free speech at universities. Cofnas mentions Jonathan Haidt, whom I admire as a leader in combatting the pall of leftist, anti-Darwinian orthodoxy reigning at universities today. Haidt describes “[tribal moral communities](#)“ in academia, particularly social psychology. Like dissenters from the movements discussed in *CofC*, opponents of the reigning orthodoxy are seen as moral reprobates (not simply intellectually mistaken). In these tribal moral communities, research that contravenes the values of the community is held to higher standards by insisting on “hyper-purism that settles for nothing less than absolute certainty and absolutely correct methodology, epistemology, and ontology” (*CofC*, Chapter 2, p. 45).

Moreover, as noted in Chapter 6, all of the movements discussed in *CofC* were essentially morally based critiques of the West, its people and its cultures—tribal moral communities by any other name. This is also a theme of John Murray Cuddihy’s masterpiece:

It is here [i.e., the Jewish moral critique of the hypocrisy of Western society], I think, that we have a far-reaching convergence of the role of the

---

<sup>21</sup> J. Philippe Rushton, *Race, Evolution, and Behavior: A Life History Perspective*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1994); J. Philippe Rushton, “Ethnic nationalism, evolutionary psychology and Genetic Similarity,” *Nations and Nationalism* 11, no. 4 (2005), 489–507.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Jewish intelligentsia for 150 years within the European system and the modernizing elite of many of the new nations: the moral passions become the ruling passions, become special pleaders. Lionel Trilling once wrote “that the moral passions are even more willful and imperious and impatient than the self-seeking passions.” It is Susan Sontag ... who notes that “the Jews pinned their hopes for integrating into modern societies on promoting the moral sense.

This morally based critique is based on a pre-existing firm foundation stemming from developments in European cultures that greatly accelerated during the [eighteenth century](#). However, the morality that is now being preached and coercively enforced as a result of the triumph of the Jewish intellectual movements reviewed in *CofC* is a morality of altruism for the people of the West that will, if continued, lead to the destruction of European peoples and their cultures. It is a vision of culture as motivated by an altruistic, guilt-suffused moral sense that was never envisioned by Enlightenment intellectuals or their descendants in the West until the triumph of these movements.

On the surface, Cofnas appeared to engage my work, but he didn’t really grasp the key arguments or how *CofC* fit into the framework of the other books in the trilogy or my other writing on evolution and culture. One suspects he had a foregone conclusion about its value—what psychologists term “motivated cognition” (which, as I attempt to demonstrate, was characteristic of the Jewish intellectuals I review in *CofC*). Like the hyper-purists discussed in several places in *CofC*, he was looking for ways to condemn research he didn’t like for deeper reasons. He understood perfectly well that a positive review would never be published. And he was deeply troubled by *CofC*s increasing acceptance outside academia and by the possible political ramifications of that acceptance. He was quite aware that the silent treatment that had surrounded the book for 20 years had failed.

So now we are back at square 1. I welcome further comment and promise to respond.

## Appendix

Cofnas provides a specific example of me misrepresenting sources based on this passage:

R. Nevitt Sanford (Chapter VI) finds that affiliation with various Christian religious sects is associated with ethnocentrism, and that individuals who have rebelled against their parents and adopted another religion or no religion are lower on ethnocentrism. These relationships are explained as due to the fact that acceptance of a Christian religion is associated with “conformity, conventionalism, authoritarian submission, determination by external pressures, thinking in ingroup-outgroup terms and the like vs. nonconformity, independence, internalization of values, and so forth” (p. 220).

First, let's look at the relevant passage from *The Authoritarian Personality*. It is certainly true that Sanford is saying that, as I summarized it, “that individuals who have rebelled against their parents and adopted another religion or no religion are lower on ethnocentrism.” The first part of that sentence could be fleshed out to reflect some more specific findings discussed by Sanford, although note that he too has a similar general statement at the beginning of his Discussion section: “Belonging to or identifying oneself with a religious body in America today certainly does not mean that one thereby takes over the traditional Christian values of tolerance, brotherhood, and equality. On the contrary, it appears that these values are more firmly held by people who do not affiliate with any religious group.”

More specifically, however, people in minor Protestant sects (too few to properly analyze separately) and Unitarians were found to be low on E (the Ethnocentrism scale), and for the major denominations there is a great deal of variation among individuals centering around a mean in the middle of E—hardly indicative of a general pattern of extreme ethnocentrism, as Sanford notes. Nevertheless, Sanford does not dismiss the idea that being a member of a major denomination per se is problematic:

It may be argued, however, that this conventional approach to religion expresses enough identification with the status quo, submission to external authority, and readiness to emphasize moralistically the differences between those who “belong” and those who do not, to differentiate, in terms of E score, members of the large denominations from the nonreligious and from the members of those minor groups which actually stand for trends of an opposite character.

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

Despite this claim that even being in a large denomination gives one enough of a sense of being in an ingroup to produce higher scores on E, Sanford looks at mother's religion in an effort to get more powerful findings. Subjects who deviate from mother's religion are more likely to be lower on E. Religion for them is interpreted as self-chosen, whereas those who accept their mother's religion tend to be higher on E and on the Anti-Semitism Scale. "Concerning these results as a whole, one might say that whereas religious affiliation goes with higher scores on the scales, this is less likely to be the case if the religion is 'one's own,' that is to say, if it has been accepted independently of or in revolt against the main carrier of religious influence in the family ... [whereas] where there are signs that the acceptance of religion has been determined primarily by conventional or external considerations, E score tends to go up." This was found to be particularly true of women.

In other words, Sanford is proposing that the real issue is whether the religion is self-chosen as indicated by being different from the mother's. Even among the major denominations, there may be wide variation in the extent to which subjects adopt their religion by individual choice, thus accounting for the wide variation in E scores:

But among the members of the major denominations there are many subjects whose religion would appear to be "genuine," in the sense that it was arrived at more or less independently of external pressure and takes the form of internalized values. These subjects, it seems, tend to score low, often very low, on ethnocentrism.

In the following quotation, Sanford effectively glosses "self-chosen" as reflecting the variation in the qualities emphasized throughout *The Authoritarian Personality*; this quote includes the part that I quoted from in *CofC* (the part that I quoted is in italics):

When the problem is approached from this point of view the psychological factors which appear as most important are much the same as those which came to the fore in the preceding chapters: *conformity, conventionalism, authoritarian submission, determination by external pressures, thinking in ingroup-outgroup terms, and the like vs. nonconformity, independence, internalization of values, and so forth.*

So, did my quote misrepresent Sanford? Here's Cofnas:

MacDonald cites Sanford out of context and totally misrepresents his conclusion. First, when Sanford refers to "conformity, conventionalism, authoritarian submission . . .," he is *not* characterizing Christian belief. He says that to understand the relation between religion and

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

ethnocentrism, we must consider what psychological factors play a role in the individual's acceptance or rejection, such as "conformity, conventionalism, authoritarian submission." He is not talking specifically about Christianity, and he says explicitly that these factors do not play a role in "genuine" Christianity. He clearly distinguishes between nominal Christians who adopt the religion of their parents or of the majority simply because they tend to submit to authority, and those "whose religion would appear to be 'genuine,' in the sense that it was arrived at more or less independently of external pressure and takes the form of internalized values" (Adorno et al. 1950:220). Sanford says that the latter—the "genuine" Christians—"tend to score low, often very low, on ethnocentrism."

First, I wrote that "affiliation with *various* Christian religious sects is linked with ethnocentrism" (emphasis added). I am not claiming anything about "all Christian religious sects," and therefore I am not claiming that, according to Sanford, Christian beliefs per se are the problem. Secondly, as noted, Sanford does make general statements linking Christianity with ethnocentrism: (1) the statement linking affiliation with large Christian denominations with ethnocentrism noted above—their means, after all, are considerably higher than the Unitarians and the minor Protestant sects; and (2) the statement at the beginning of the Discussion section, also noted above: "Belonging to or identifying oneself with a religious body in America today certainly does not mean that one thereby takes over the traditional Christian values of tolerance, brotherhood, and equality. On the contrary, it appears that these values are more firmly held by people who do not affiliate with any religious group" (p. 219).

This last statement is particularly interesting because it appears in the general summary of the chapter—the take-home message, if you will. One wonders why Sanford would make such statements if he didn't want to convey the idea that Christian religious affiliation per se was problematic (although, again, I never claimed that Sanford was claiming that Christian belief per se was the problem: I wrote "various Christian religious sects," not "all Christian religious sects"). It's also noteworthy that in my comments on Chapter II of *The Authoritarian Personality*—also written by Sanford, the strongly identified Irishman and anti-Semite Mack is diagnosed as pathological because of his strong sense of being in an ingroup (pp. 169–170). Given that Judaism is all about having a strong sense of ingroup, I have to suppose that Sanford (who was not Jewish) was willfully ignoring some obvious realities given that he was writing for a project funded by the American Jewish Committee. Without a strong sense of being an ingroup, Judaism would have died out long ago.

In the contested passage, I essentially cut to the chase: I did not recount Sanford's discussion of how he ends up concluding that whether the subject accepted mother's religion is the most important variable, or his suggestion that

## Reply to Nathan Cofnas

low E scorers among the major denominations may have self-chosen their religion for other reasons. Instead, I went directly from claiming that Sanford had claimed that “affiliation with various Christian religious sects is associated with ethnocentrism, and that individuals who have rebelled against their parents and adopted another religion or no religion are lower on ethnocentrism” to Sanford’s conclusion that variation in E was linked to those traits emphasized by the book as a whole: “conformity, conventionalism, authoritarian submission, determination by external pressures, thinking in ingroup-outgroup terms, and the like vs. nonconformity, independence, internalization of values, and so forth.” Clearly, I did emphasize the basic points: that Sanford concluded that rebellion against parents was important, and I implied that Christian religious belief per se was not the problem.

So I really don’t see where I misrepresented anything.

Cofnas continues:

Second, Sanford characterizes traditional Christianity in a positive, not a negative, way. He refers to “Christian humanism which works against prejudice” (Adorno et al. [1950](#):215). He writes that “in America today,” the “traditional Christian values of tolerance, brotherhood, and equality” appear to be “more firmly held by people who do not affiliate with any religious group,” though “genuine” Christians low in ethnocentrism “probably predominate in [certain] Protestant denominations” (Adorno et al. [1950](#):219–20). Thus Sanford identifies the values promoted by the Frankfurt School with *Christianity*, not Judaism.

Again, I never claimed that Sanford claimed that Christian beliefs per se were the problem. Otherwise, why would the mean E scores for Unitarians and members of minor Protestant sects be so low, and why would so many members of the major denominations be low on E? But Sanford is clearly saying that despite these traditional Christian values and an ideal of “Christian humanism,” Christians in 1940s’ America did not in general have these values. Clearly, he is indicting Christianity as it actually existed, although he certainly recognizes that there are exceptions.

Finally, whether one believes that I misrepresented Sanford’s chapter, it does nothing to alter my general comments on the Frankfurt School.